

Finally, the House will debate a bill providing real oversight of government contracts by limiting how long Federal no-bid contracts can last and requiring agencies to minimize the use of no-bid contracts.

Real oversight will return to Washington, and this week we will pass important legislation that brings real accountability along with it.

NINTH CIRCUIT—JUDICIAL ACTIVISM

(Mr. PITTS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, for years the Federal courts have drifted towards judicial activism, and nowhere is this dangerous trend more fully embraced than the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals. Based in San Francisco and covering nine western States, the Ninth Circuit has given us some of the more outrageous decisions in recent memory. These are the folks who say the words "under God" are unconstitutional in our pledge. Fortunately for our Nation and our Constitution this mostly Democrat-appointed court isn't the last defense against judicial activism. The U.S. Supreme Court regularly reviews the Ninth Circuit's rulings, and not surprisingly, the high court often overturns them. In fact, in this term the Supreme Court has overturned every Ninth Circuit ruling it has taken up. If you break it out by the votes of the individual Justices, the score is 67 votes to overturn and just five votes to uphold. These are definitely second-string back benchers. It is time they begin interpreting the Constitution, not rewriting it.

IRAQ

(Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I want to express my deepest concern for the situation that is worsening in Iraq.

March 19 of this year will mark the fifth year of war, and still Vice President CHENEY states that the Democratic strategy toward Iraq validates al Qaeda's agenda. This comment really means that anyone that disagrees with him gets accused of this issue.

Terrorists instill fear in their enemies, and it is this fear that generates self-defeating behavior. It is this fear that led the American people to believe that war was a validated solution, and still try to link it to September 11. It is this fear that has cost the United States billions of dollars on Iraq reconstruction plans, while neglecting our own system.

OPPOSING THE DEMOCRATIC SUPPLEMENTAL ACT

(Mr. BISHOP of Utah asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, it is said that politicians live in the past and statesmen vote for the future. Indeed, the options that we have today, both militarily and diplomatic, are based on votes that were taken by Congress 10 or 15 years ago.

The supplemental act recently unveiled by the Democratic majority appears to have been written by politicians, not statesmen. It includes the postponement of the acquisition of two F-35 fighter aircraft, which by itself does not seem too significant, but it bespeaks an attitude to be feared. For when we postpone the acquisition of technologically advanced military equipment, we place the future air superiority, something we have had since the Korean War and take for granted, in jeopardy. When we divert dollars from one branch of the military to support another branch of the military, we place all of the military in jeopardy. All four branches of the military deserve to be fully and adequately funded, and that is something this supplemental does not do.

This supplemental simply starts us down the road to a place where a future Congress will look back and criticize us for our failure to be statesmen.

SUPPORTING THE DEMOCRATIC SUPPLEMENTAL ACT

(Mr. KAGEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. KAGEN. Mr. Speaker, last fall the American people went to the polls and they voted for positive change and new direction, not only in the way we do business here in Washington, but also in Iraq. The 110th Congress is fulfilling the mandate the American people provided by putting forward a supplemental bill that will guarantee three things: First, support for our troops before, during and after being in harm's way; second, accountability and responsibility, not only from our own administration, but from the newly elected Iraqi government as well; and, third, a positive change away from Iraq and back towards al Qaeda by guaranteeing an end to our involvement in the civil war in Iraq.

The American people will no longer write blank checks to this administration, and neither will this Congress; nor will we continue to send our sons and daughters to the sands of Iraq in an open-ended commitment. The time has come for this administration to listen to the will of the people.

The American people demanded new leadership, positive change and a new direction, and that is exactly what this Congress is delivering.

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BALANCE THE BUDGET WITHOUT RAISING TAXES

(Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, simply chasing higher spending with higher taxes, as the Democrats want, will fail to address the unsustainable growth of government spending. We must balance the budget without tax increases.

Part of the Republican plan is to make permanent the tax relief that continues to support our Nation's economic prosperity. Our pro-growth policies have worked to support our economy's solid sustained growth and have created more than 7.4 million new jobs. This growth has also fueled double-digit growth in Federal revenues and put us on a path to balancing the budget.

The Democrat plan would simply reverse this progress with job-killing automatic tax increases.

The Republican plan also includes reforms to unsustainable entitlement programs so they can meet the mounting challenges and obligations of the future.

Mr. Speaker, the American people elected us to find solutions, not create more problems. I urge my colleagues to work with the Republicans to implement these real and workable solutions for a more fiscally responsible tomorrow.

WALTER REED AND NEED TO TAKE CARE OF OUR WOUNDED SOLDIERS

(Mr. RODRIGUEZ asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. RODRIGUEZ. Mr. Speaker, since The Washington Post broke the story on Building 18 at Walter Reed, we have heard similar stories of unacceptably bad conditions at other facilities around the country. While The Post should be commended for bringing the information to this Nation, it should never have gotten to this point. Last week, we also learned that some Republican colleagues knew of these conditions and basically did nothing. This response of doing nothing is not acceptable.

Rather than inquiring about such bad conditions and deciding to do something, they choose to brush it off and basically bring it under the table. And rather than finding out who was responsible for the housing of our troops that had mold, that had mice and cockroaches, the administration chose to look the other way.

Doing nothing is not acceptable. Last week, the House Veterans' Affairs Committee, which I sit on, held hearings, and will continue to hold hearings, on the treatment of our wounded soldiers throughout this country. We want to see the widespread problems that exist corrected, and we recognize the seriousness. It is time for us to do the right thing for our soldiers.